

Interagency Wildfire Management Team  
Meeting Notes  
June 19, 2002

Carey Bare (Ecology Group, LANL) announced that the goals and objectives of the IWMT are being formalized in accordance with LANL requirements.

Gene Darling (Emergency Management and Response, LANL) reported that the numerous fires in the Arizona and New Mexico region have depleted the local resources that are available to respond if a fire were to start in the Jemez Mountains. LANL Emergency Management and Response would assist in the initial attack of a fire as far to the west as La Cueva. Gene also reported that the fire conditions in the Los Alamos region remain at extreme levels. The relative humidity is 3 percent to 5 percent, the 100-hour woody fuels are at 2 percent moisture, and the 1000-hr fuels are at less than 5 percent moisture.

Denny Erickson (Associate Directorship for Weapons Physics, LANL) is interested in the factual basis for the benefits of thinning and wildfire hazard reduction activities. Denny also reported on the recent health risk assessment after the Cerro Grande Fire conducted by the New Mexico Environment Department. According to this report, LANL contributed very little to the post-fire risk.

Fran Talley (Public Affairs Office, LANL) distributed the announcement for the „Community Safety and Security Day% which will be conducted in conjunction with the Farmer,s Market on June 20. Numerous LANL and Los Alamos County groups will be represented with booths and other displays promoting homeland security, fire protection, emergency management and disaster preparedness.

Randy Balice (Ecology Group, LANL) has been conducting sampling for fuel structures and wildfire hazards in a variety of environments. In the piñon-juniper woodlands, conditions are so severe that very little new growth has occurred this year. As examples, mountain mahogany and wavy leaf oak have not produced any new leaves. In ponderosa pine forests, the situation is similar. Plant growth and plant green-up are minimal or nonexistent. However, at higher elevations in aspen forests that were severely burned during the Cerro Grande Fire, the aspen sprouts are 4 to 5 feet tall. Underneath these sprouts, native plant species were commonly found, although none were in abundance.

Mia Perotta (Private Citizen, Los Alamos) has noticed that the drought conditions have caused fruit trees to drop green fruit. Mia also encouraged the continued publicizing of fire protection measures and of issues related to fire restrictions.

The next IWMT meeting will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, July 3, at TA-21, Building 210 in the Conference Room (142). The IWMT meets every other week and these meetings are open to the public. Contact Randy Balice (balice@lanl.gov, 665-1270) for further information, or to get on the distribution list for these meeting notes.